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portant industries. The peculiar nature of this service has consisted in the preparation of concise, readable volumes, in each of which an attempt has been made to give a sort of bird's-eye view of the entire history of some important material of commerce. The author of the present book has undertaken to develop the story of petroleum in non-technical language, with the two-fold purpose of portraying the great expansion of the industry within the last half-century, and of pointing out the marked dependence of the masses in their daily life, upon petroleum and its secondary products. It is not too much to say that he has succeeded admirably in the execution of his task.

In the earlier chapters the writer discusses the ancient history of petroleum, its real nature, its geographical distribution, and the much disputed question of its origin. He then proceeds to a consideration of the evolution of the petroleum industry, pointing out that, in general, production has been marked by three distinct steps—the skimming of the oil from the surfaces of streams, pools or springs; the digging of wells or pits; and, finally, the well-known modern method of drilling wells. The important part which the United States has played in the oil industry necessitated the writer giving considerable attention to its evolution in this country. However, our principal rival—Russia—receives due consideration, while other well-known but less worked deposits by no means are overlooked.

The sections which treat of the marvellous transformations which have been brought about in the transportation of petroleum, and of the wonderful growth of the oil industry in recent times are particularly interesting and instructive. In conclusion, the author predicts the eventual decline of our oil business. "Not the present generation nor the one next to come is likely to see the supply fail, but both are sure to see changes such as the industry has never shown before. With a continuation of the present conditions no power on earth can avert the speedy exhaustion of the fields in this country. Standard Oil will be a thing of the past, and America will have to seek her oil in the countries where she long held undisputed sway in the oil trade."

The book is written in a pleasing style, and contains upwards of thirty illustrations. Not only is it of interest to the general reader, but it cannot fail also to be of value to teachers and students in courses in commercial or economic geography.

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**Exploitation de Pétrole.** Historique—Extraction—Procédés de Sondage—Géographie et Géologie, Recherches des Gîtes—Exploitation des gisements chimie—Théories de la Formation du Pétrole. Par L. C. Tassart. xv and 726 pp., 302 figures in the text and maps. H. Dunod and E. Pinat, Paris, 1908. Fr. 35.

An authoritative work on petroleum and the products and industries to which it gives rise. It treats in detail of petroleum fields in all parts of the world and its information is practically complete up to the time of publication. It contains, for example, a full account of the recent development of the oil industry in Illinois, and of the large increase in the productivity of Texas; but it lacks, of course, the latest information on the growth of the industry in California. Though a scientific work, most of it can be read with interest and profit by the general public. We do not always see a work so fully treating the technology of a subject that, at the same time, is so well adapted for general reading. The numerous maps illumine the text.